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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 000079

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/CE (HODGES, SCHROEDER)
COMMERCE FOR AGORSHENIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/20/2020
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EIND](#) [GM](#) [PGOV](#)
SUBJECT: GERMAN ECONOMICS MINISTER: SMALL IS GOOD

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keep the euro strong. Bruederle also mentioned his upcoming visit to Washington February 1 and 2 and asked for Ambassador's help in securing appointments with key officials at Commerce, Energy, USTR, Treasury and the White House's National Economic Council.

17. (C) COMMENT. Bruederle is less charismatic than his predecessor zu Guttenberg, an energetic 38-year old aristocrat, but not as pale as former CSU economics minister Michael Glos (2005-2009). He may be a dinosaur, as some critics say, but he is a very strong-willed dinosaur with more vision than Glos, and more experience than zu Guttenberg. On the other hand, CDU contacts tell us that they perceive him as a weak link in the cabinet line-up, since he lacks zu Guttenberg's political gravitas. FDP contacts tell us that Bruederle can be a wild card who from time to time needs to be reined in. Bruederle's frequent, off-the-cuff comments are a case in point. Last November, he dismissed criticisms over the government's proposed debt-financed tax cuts from Germany's Council of Economic Advisors (the highly respected Five Wise Men) with the quip that professors cannot replace the reasoning of political leaders. That is why they are advisors and not decision-makers. Bruederle has finally reached the pinnacle of power after 11 years in opposition, but the jury is still out on whether he can successfully manage an economic turnaround in 2010. END COMMENT.
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